Mr. Hunter, L/SFP concurs in release of this

(B6) b/c

Release per Mr. Hunter

~~FAK~~ File

# U.S.S. LIBERTY

## CHRONOLOGY ON THE MORNING OF JUNE 8, 1967

0515 hours -- Double-fuselage twin-engine aircraft circled the LIBERTY three or four times and departed in the direction of Tel Aviv.

0850 hours -- Single jet aircraft passed astern and then circled the U.S.S. LIBERTY.

1030 hours -- Flight of two jet aircraft circled the U.S.S. LIBERTY three times.

1056 hours -- Single aircraft circled the ship at high altitude.

1126 hours -- Single aircraft circled the ship.

1150 hours -- Single aircraft flew over the ship.

1220 hours -- Single twin-engine aircraft circled the ship.

1245 hours -- Single aircraft flew over the ship at an altitude of 5 to 8,000 feet.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY J.M. Razi DATE Sept. 19, 1980
RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
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Deny
b-5

The Secretary of State presents his compliments to His Excellency the Ambassador of Israel and has the honor to refer to the Ambassador's Note of June 10, 1967 concerning the attacks by Israeli aircraft and torpedo boats on the United States naval vessel U.S.S. Liberty, which were carried out shortly after 1400 and 1430 hours local time, respectively, on June 8, 1967 while the U.S.S. Liberty was engaged in peaceful activities in international waters.

At the time of the attack, the U.S.S. Liberty was flying the American flag, and its identification was clearly indicated in large white letters and numerals on its hull. It was broad daylight and the weather conditions were excellent. Experience demonstrates that both the flag and the identification number of the vessel were readily visible from the air.

Beginning at about 0515 hours local time on June 8, 1967, and at intervals thereafter prior to the first attack, aircraft believed to be Israeli circled the U.S.S. Liberty on a number of occasions.

/Accordingly,

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Accordingly, there is every reason to believe that the U.S.S. Liberty was or should have been identified, or at least her nationality determined, prior to the attack. In these circumstances, the later military attack by Israeli aircraft on the U.S.S. Liberty is quite literally incomprehensible. As a minimum, the attack must be condemned as an act of military recklessness reflecting wanton disregard for human life.

The subsequent attack by Israeli torpedo boats, substantially after the vessel was or should have been identified by Israeli military forces, manifests the same reckless disregard for human life. The silhouette and conduct of the U.S.S. Liberty readily distinguished it from any vessel that could have been considered as hostile. The U.S.S. Liberty was peacefully engaged, posed no threat whatsoever to the torpedo boats, and obviously carried no armament affording it a combat capability. It could and should have been scrutinized visually at close range before torpedoes were fired.

While the Ambassador of Israel has informed the Secretary of State that "the Government of Israel is prepared to make amends for the tragic loss of life and material damage," the Secretary of State wishes to make

/clear

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clear that the United States Government expects the Government of Israel also to take the disciplinary measures which international law requires in the event of wrongful conduct by the military personnel of a State. He wishes also to make clear that the United States Government expects the Government of Israel to issue instructions necessary to ensure that United States personnel and property will not again be endangered by the wrongful actions of Israeli military personnel.

The United States Government expects that the Government of Israel will provide compensation in accordance with international law to the extent that it is possible to compensate for the losses sustained in this tragic event. The Department of State will, in the near future, present to the Government of Israel a full monetary statement of its claim.

Department of State

Washington,

Drafted 7/5/67

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At the time of the attack, the U.S.S. Liberty was flying the American flag, and its identification was clearly indicated in large white letters and numerals on its hull. It was broad daylight and the weather conditions were excellent. Experience demonstrates that both the flag and the identification number of the vessel were readily visible from the air. At 0830 hours local time on June 8, 1967, a single jet aircraft first passed astern and then circled the U.S.S. Liberty. At 1056 hours and at 1126 hours local time single aircraft again circled the U.S.S. Liberty.

Accordingly, there is every reason to believe that the U.S.S. Liberty was or should have been identified, or at least her nationality determined, prior to the attack.

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While the Ambassador of Israel has informed the Secretary of State that "the Government of Israel is prepared to make amends for the tragic loss of life and material damage," the Secretary of State wishes to make clear that the United States Government expects the Government of Israel also to take the disciplinary measures which international law requires in the event of

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Department of State

Washington,

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